

Remember former President Aristide? We spent a lot of money and time getting him back there. Now he is opposing the economic development of his country. Any way you look at it, all of this suggests that somebody in the White House owes the American people and this Congress an explanation. After all this money, time, and effort, what have we gotten? What is going on in Haiti and why? Will American taxpayers, and incidentally American voters, agree that this was \$3 billion well spent? Or is this whole episode another success story that was more successful for its spin than its substance in the White House? We shall see.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. WOOLSEY] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, each year over 150,000 incidents of domestic violence involve a gun.

In April, a woman in the district I represent was shot to death by her husband, even though she had a restraining order against him.

Last week, a Ventura County sheriff's deputy, responding to a domestic violence call, was killed by a man with a long criminal record.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to put an end to this insanity.

That is why I am applauding President Clinton for announcing his support today for legislation, sponsored by Congressman BOB TORRICELLI, which will prohibit people convicted of a domestic violence offense from purchasing a gun.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense way to prevent tragedy.

It is simple: Wife-beaters, child abusers, and other domestic violence offenders should not have access to a gun. Period.

UPDATE ON THE 11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT IN ILLINOIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. WELLER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of representing the most diverse district in the State of Illinois. I represent part of the city of Chicago, the south suburbs, in Cook and Will Counties, and farm communities as well as cornfields. That means that I have a district not only that is very diverse, but time and time again I am looking for ways and issues and concerns that are very, very common throughout this very diverse district that I have the privilege of representing.

I have found over the last 17 months now that I have had the privilege of representing my district two of the

most common priorities that the people of the district that I represent have. Of course, they want to see a change in how Washington works but they also want to see a Congress in Washington looking out for local concerns.

I am proud that in the last 17 months we have been working to keep our commitments, to honor those principles and to change how Washington works while looking out for local concerns. As I look back over the last 16, 17 months, I am particularly proud that some of those most basic principles that we have worked for in changing how Washington works are being honored. One of the most basic, of course, is forcing Washington to live within its means.

Of course, the deficit today is at its lowest level in 15 years, having dropped \$60 to \$70 billion because we have lived and worked hard to bring down that deficit, doing something that every family does, working to live within our means. We have twice sent now to the President real welfare reform that emphasizes work and family, responsibility. Unfortunately, he vetoed it. And also we sent to the President a plan which would lower taxes for working families. In my district for a family with children, that would mean almost an extra \$1,000 in take-home pay had the President signed that bill rather than vetoing it. We also, because of our concern for seniors, people like my mom and dad that are on Medicare, we are working of course to prevent Medicare from going bankrupt. Everyone knows Washington does nothing and Medicare goes bankrupt in 2001.

We sent to the President this past year a plan to save Medicare, to keep it solvent for the next generation. In fact we increased funding for Medicare by 62 percent, \$724 billion, as part of that plan and would have kept Medicare solvent until the next generation. Unfortunately, partisan Presidential politics got in the way and the President vetoed that plan.

But also not only are we working to keep our commitment to change how Washington works by working to balance the budget, to save Medicare, to reform welfare and, of course, lower taxes for working families, but we are also honoring the commitment to look out for local concerns.

I am particularly pleased that in the last few months alone, this House has passed and sent to the Senate as well as sent to the President legislation that looks out for local concerns important to the State that I represent, the land of Lincoln, the State of Illinois. I was particularly pleased that back in February the President signed our legislation to redevelop the Joliet Arsenal, 24,000-acre military facility to redevelop it for conservation, a veterans' cemetery and job creation. It was a bipartisan project, a bipartisan priority. Because of bipartisanship we were successful in getting it signed into law. Of course now it is time to put the

money where our mouth is and to move forward and, of course, fund that priority.

I am particularly pleased that the House honored our request to provide \$18.4 million which will complete development of the veterans' cemetery at the Joliet Arsenal. In fact the VA says that if that legislation is signed into law that that funding would allow the cemetery to be opened by 1999.

In the Interior appropriations bill, thanks to the help of a lot of people including the gentleman from Illinois, SID YATES, and the Illinois delegation, we have \$3.35 million for continued development of the National Tall Grass Prairie. Redevelopment of the Joliet Arsenal is clearly our top conservation and veterans' priority for Illinois for many of us and I am pleased that we are making progress.

When it comes to crime which is so important to the south suburbs and the parts of the city of Chicago that I represent, we are also making some real progress. Last year the President signed our legislation which allowed Federal prison grant funds for the first time ever to be used for juvenile detention center construction and operation. In the appropriation bill that we are going to be debating today we provide \$680 million for prison grants, \$50 million more than the President asked for, and for the first time ever counties such as Will and Kankakee and La Salle, struggling to deal with gang problems, will now be able to apply for and use those funds for construction and operation of juvenile detention centers. That is an important issue.

We are looking out for local concerns. But one issue today I want to close with is something very important. Last Friday a number of my colleagues and I from Illinois went home to a flood-devastated Chicago region. In fact I have a photo of a news clipping here. Thousands and thousands of homes were flooded in the Chicago region. Many of those homes saw severe damage.

REVIEW OF 104TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, I think for a moment here I would like to reflect on what the 104th Congress has not done. This 104th Congress, led by the Republicans for the first time in 4 decades, has not done several things. We can applaud the fact that they have not done a few things. For example, the Gingrich-Dole-Lott plan to cut \$270 billion out of Medicare to provide tax breaks for wealthy people, thank goodness President Clinton was there to veto that effort. Because for a lot of senior citizens it would have meant higher premiums and for families it would have meant a greater economic burden. A lot of those families are middle-income families struggling to get

by. The people on the Republican side of the aisle argued that these tax breaks for wealthy people would somehow fuel the economy. If you just give the rich more money, they sense that somehow this economy will move forward. Well, President Clinton disagreed with that, I disagreed with it, and many Democratic leaders did as well. What we have to show for that decision to veto the Gingrich plan is an economy that truly is moving forward. We have seen 10 million new jobs created since President Clinton was elected as President. One might say, "Well, I'm sure every President does something like that, don't they?" Take a look back at the years of President George Bush. Over a 4-year period of time, we created 2 million new jobs in America, the slowest job creation in 50 years, and the slowest economic growth in half a century. Fortunately President Clinton's plan to reduce the deficit and get the economy moving forward again worked very well in creating jobs and bringing down interest rates.

For a lot of families across America, my own family included, we were able to refinance our home mortgage which meant a lower monthly payment. In fact we now find that we have the highest home ownership rate in 15 years in the United States. If we are talking about realizing the American dream and moving the economy forward, certainly job creation and home ownership are two things that are part of it.

Let me add one other element, reducing the deficit. The Republicans like to talk about being fiscally responsible, reducing the deficit. They tend to overlook the fact that under Presidents Reagan and Bush we had the most dramatic increases in the national deficit in the history of the United States of America. President Clinton came in and said, "I'm going to push a plan that's going to bring the deficit down and yet not strangle the economy." And it worked. We are now about to see the fourth straight year of deficit reduction in Washington, with no thanks to the Republican side of the aisle which did not give the President one single vote in the House or the Senate for his deficit reduction plan. Because of the deficit plan by the President, we have seen the deficit come down 4 straight years. The last time that occurred was the 1840's, over 150 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, things are moving forward. But there are things that this Republican Congress has failed to do which should be done in the closing weeks. There will be a lot of speeches, a lot of efforts by Members on the other side to somehow paint a pretty picture about the days of NEWT GINGRICH and Bob Dole and TRENT LOTT. They want to erase the image out of people's minds of this gridlocked Congress with the two longest Government shutdowns in our history. They want to try to get this image out of their minds of petulance and arrogance and say that perhaps we have accomplished great things.

Let us hope that beyond the speeches, they will do a couple of tangible things: First, pass the increase in the minimum wage. How in the world can we say to 500,000 people in my home State of Illinois who got up this morning, went to work, got the kids off to day care or to some summer program, went to a tough job, making \$4.25, \$4.50 an hour, that that is as good as it gets in America? Over the years we have increased that minimum wage so that young people starting out, so that families working to try to keep things together have a fighting chance. But the Republicans tried to stop us here in the House, they have tried to stop us in the Senate, and that bill even though it has passed both Chambers now, because a few Republicans defected and joined the Democrats, is still stalled. Why in the world have we not passed this minimum wage increase? We owe it to these working families.

Health care. If you talk to families across this country, one of their biggest single concerns is health insurance. The Kennedy-Kassebaum bill, a bipartisan bill by Senator KENNEDY and Senator KASSEBAUM, passed the Senate by a margin of 100 to 0. What it says is you cannot discriminate against people because of preexisting medical conditions when you sell insurance and you ought to be able to move your insurance from job to job and not be afraid to lose it. Simple, honest principles. We should see something positive come out of this Congress for working families across America.

FOREIGN POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, the editorialists of the Omaha World Herald have prepared, I think, a thorough and telling critique of the Clinton administration foreign policy. I would like to share with my colleagues that editorial.

The document referred to is as follows:

[From the Omaha World Herald]

NATION HAS BEEN LUCKY TO AVOID SERIOUS TEST OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

Americans have been lucky. The president they elected in 1992 displayed little expertise or interest in foreign policy. Still, he has held office during a time of relative stability. His administration has had to deal with few international crises.

However, the relative stability that came with the end of the Cold War may not continue. President Clinton's foreign policy is an important basis for judging his qualifications for re-election in November.

Events of the past few days have demonstrated why concerns about the president's judgment continue.

In Saudi Arabia, the monarchy has withheld evidence from U.S. investigators about a terrorist bombing in which 19 American servicemen died. The Saudis have also dismissed the suggestion that U.S. forces in that country ought to be moved into safer

quarters. Saudi Arabia has been called America's closest ally in the Arab world. This is not the way a resolute United States government would allow itself to be treated by its friends.

In Israel, the voters repudiated Clinton's preferred candidate, Shimon Peres. They elected as their prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who promised to pursue a more confrontational policy toward the Palestinians and neighboring Arab nations.

In the former Yugoslavia, the administration has quietly distanced itself further from its promise to remove U.S. troops by the end of the year. A pullout anytime soon would cause the region to erupt once again in civil war.

The administration's bumbling efforts to eliminate the influence of Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic have been painful to watch. Moreover, it has been disclosed, the White House looked the other way as Iran's Revolutionary Guards established a strong presence, with guerrilla troops and a supply pipeline, in Bosnia. The administration informed Congress two weeks ago that the Iranians were gone, but indications are that some of them remained behind.

Riots in Northern Ireland call attention to the seemingly irreconcilable divisions that exist there. By swinging U.S. prestige to the side of the Irish Republican Army, Clinton injected the United States into a dispute in which America had no vital interests. In the process, he offended the British government. Then he made the administration look inept when the IRA broke its own cease-fire.

A contributing editor at Reason magazine, Michael McMenamin, has written that the IRA's strategy, which Clinton has aided by pressuring the British government to grant concessions, is to force the British to unilaterally withdraw from Northern Ireland, leading to sectarian war in the north.

"Any American government that doesn't understand this doesn't know Ireland, doesn't know the IRA, doesn't know the Ulster Protestants, and is helping to bring an Irish Bosnia closer," he wrote.

Clinton has presided over an unprecedented reduction in America's ability to use force as a foreign policy tool. More shrinkage lies ahead. George Melloan wrote in The Wall Street Journal that projected military spending in the next five years will be \$50 billion to \$100 billion short of what will be needed to achieve even the reduced force and procurement levels that Clinton military strategy envisions. Melloan noted that Bob Dole would arrest the slide in preparedness, as well as pushing promptly for a missile defense and expanding NATO.

China now has the ability to hit the U.S. mainland with intercontinental ballistic missiles. Yet Secretary of State Warren Christopher has been to Damascus 17 times and Beijing only once, Georgetown University diplomatic scholar Casimir Yost pointed out.

Concerns exist about how careful and competent this administration would be in a dangerous situation such as Presidents John Kennedy and George Bush had to face in the Cuban missile crisis and Gulf War, respectively. It's difficult to observe the Clinton approach without becoming seriously concerned about how effectively this administration would handle a major and sudden threat to vital U.S. interests.

MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.